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Critical Notes

TWO SUMERIAN LEXICOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Tablet No. 1596 of the Museum of the University of Pennsylvania gives the reading of two words which are of some importance. These I wish to bring to the notice of Sumerologists. The tablet, containing various short sentences, is a bilingual schooltext. Rev. line 7 reads:

ur-tur-ri é'-ta-ab-ši-en
kal-ba-am šu-ši-a

The phonetic compliment *ri* points to the reading of 𒄠 = *tur*. *Ur-tur* 𒄠𒄠 is to be distinguished from *ur-ku* 𒄠𒄠 which interchanges with *ur-gal*, "large, or grown-up dog," in contrast to *ur-tur* 𒄠𒄠𒄠 *miranu*. The *ur-tur-ri* in the present text is doubtless in opposition to *ur-bar-ra*, "the wild dog." The Semitic translation is too vague. *Ur-tur-ri* should be translated by "house-dog," or "domesticated dog."

The other point of note concerns a new verb, which is found Rev. line 9:

ur-tur-ri šir-ra-ab-ši-en ma-ab-en-na,

which the Semitic translates:

ku-ši-da i-ga-ab-bu-ú,

"Conquer ye (the dog) they say." The text gives us for the first time the Sumerian verb *en(n)a*, "to speak." With *en(n)a* compare *emesal enim* = *inim*, "word."

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